



Freight Train

Words and music by Elizabeth Cotten

Performed by Elizabeth Cotten

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Elizabeth Cotten (1893–1987) was an American folk and blues musician. She was a self-taught left-handed guitarist who played a guitar strung for a right-handed player, but she played it upside down. Her signature alternate bass style has become known as "Cotten picking." She was discovered by the folk-singing Seeger family while she was working for them as a housekeeper! She was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as part of the Class of 2022 as an early influence.

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ABOUT THE SONG

"Freight Train" is an American folk song written by Elizabeth Cotton in the early 20th century and popularized during the American Folk revival and British skiffle period of the 1950s and 1960s. By Cotten's own account in the 1985 BBC series *Down Home*, she composed "Freight Train" as a teenager (sometime between 1906 and 1912), inspired by the sound of the trains rolling in on the tracks near her home in North Carolina.

4/4 Time

FREIGHT TRAIN

Key C / Original Key Bb

Elizabeth Cotton

INTRO {C} {G} {G7} {C} {E7} {F} {C,2} {G7,2} {C}

REFRAIN

*Freight Train Freight Train Run So Fast
Freight Train, Freight Train, Run So Fast
Please Don't Tell What Train I'm On
They Won't Know What Route I'm Going*

- 1) When I Am Dead And In My Grave
No More Good Times Here I'll Crave
Place The Stones At My Head And Feet
And Tell Them All That I'm Gone To Sleep

 - 2) When I Die Lord Bury Me Deep
Way Down On Old Chestnut Street
So I Can Hear Old Number Nine
As She Comes Rolling By

 - 3) When I Die Lord Bury Me Deep
Way Down On Old Chestnut Street
Place The Stones At My Head And Feet
And Tell Them All That I've Gone To Sleep
-

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Please Don't Tell What Train I'm On
They Won't Know What Route I'm Going*

Elizabeth Cotton

INTRO {C} {G} {G7} {C} {E7} {F} {C,2} {G7,2} {C}

REFRAIN

*{C} Freight Train Freight Train {G} Run So Fast
 {G7} Freight Train, Freight Train, {C} Run So Fast
 {E7} Please Don't Tell What {F} Train I'm On
 They Won't {C,2} Know What {G7,2} Route I'm {C} Going*

- 1) {C} When I Am Dead And {G} In My Grave
 {G7} No More Good Times {C} Here I'll Crave
 {E7} Place The Stones At My {F} Head And Feet
 And Tell Them {C,2} All That I'm {G7,2} Gone To {C} Sleep

 - 2) {C} When I Die, Lord {G} Bury Me Deep
 {G7} Way Down On Old {C} Chestnut Street
 So {E7} I Can Hear Old {F} Number Nine
 As {C,2} She Comes {G,2} Rolling {C} By

 - 3) {C} When I Die Lord {G} Bury Me Deep
 {G7} Way Down On Old {C} Chestnut Street
 {E7} Place The Stones At My {F} Head And Feet
 And Tell Them {C,2} All That I've {G7,2} Gone To {C} Sleep
-

REFRAIN

*{C} Freight Train Freight Train {G} Run So Fast
 {G7} Freight Train, Freight Train, {C} Run So Fast
 {E7} Please Don't Tell What {F} Train I'm On
 They Won't {C,2} Know What {G7,2} Route I'm {C} Going*